

I Wanted To Tell Him by **dadsBBQparty**

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Summary:

When he opens his eyes, he's seeing something he's only seen on television. He's staring at the vibrant, busy streets of Manhattan. He hears the frustration, the joy, and the rushing as people try to find their destination.

Richie knows one thing. He was definitely in his bed right before this. He definitely fell asleep in his bed.

Thirteen year old Richie somehow finds himself in 2016. He comes up with a plan for what to do when he gets back to where he's supposed to be.

I Wanted To Tell Him

Author's Note:

this was just a weird idea i got from math seminar. I can't really explain it haha

When he opens his eyes, he's seeing something he's only seen on television. He's staring at the vibrant, busy streets of Manhattan. He hears the frustration, the joy, and the rushing as people try to find their destination.

He's convinced himself it was only a dream until someone bumps into him. They curse at him, wondering what a young boy is doing alone in the middle of the city, and he's not quite sure how to answer this rhetorical question.

Richie knows one thing. He was definitely in his bed right before this. He definitely fell asleep in his bed.

He's unsure of everything else. He doesn't know how he got here. He's also not sure when he got here. Everything is different, even from the movies he watches with Eddie. He doesn't know what those devices people are speaking into are. They are sure as hell not like his walkman, which he, unfortunately, doesn't have since being thrown into this new world. He also doesn't recognize these cars that are lulled on the busy street. He would have known if New York just had these really amazing cars. Eddie would have told him.

He runs into a cafe at the end of the street, his ears heating up as people curse at him for getting in their way.

"Is he alone?" he can hear someone mutter as he walks into the cafe. As if it's any of their business.

There's a newspaper by the door, and he grabs it. He holds onto it as tight as he can as he looks for some sort of answer.

2016.

He's fucking positive he wasn't asleep that long.

“Hey, buddy, are you alone?” a woman asks him. He looks over his shoulder, hesitant on how to respond to such a simple question. She seems safe. They’re probably in one of the safer places in Manhattan. ... Not that he’s ever been here before- or even anywhere like it. She’s older than his mom, he knows that, by the grey hair. At least the last time he saw his mom. He’d have to ask Eddie how old she’d end up being in 2016.

Fuck, is his mom even alive in 2016?

“I-I’m lost,” Richie finally answers, hugging the newspaper to his chest. He didn’t know if he was alone. He assumes the other losers aren’t here, at least in their younger forms- he probably would have been with them.

He sits down with her. She asks him if he’s hungry, and he can’t stomach the idea of eating right now. He thinks he might throw up if he’s given any food.

“Who should I contact?” she asks. She has one of those devices in her hand. “What’s your parent’s phone number?”

That’s a phone.

“I don’t know,” Richie answers. He doesn’t want them to call his home. Would they even live in Derry? He doesn’t want to know if his parents are alive. He doesn’t want anyone to contact them. What if something happened to them? “Not my parents. I need Eddie right now.” He doesn’t know how they would get in contact with him. His gut tells him he’s here. He can’t imagine being far away from Eddie, and he hopes that somehow Eddie got out of that hell hole that is Derry.

“Who’s Eddie?” she asks him gently.

“Do you have a phone book?” Richie asks in return. She looks puzzled by the question.

“N-No, but I can look him up... What’s his last name?”

“It’s Edward Kaspbrak,” Richie says hurriedly. “With a ‘K’.”

She stares at the device in her hand for a moment before responding, "Oh, is he the one who works a few blocks from here?"

I don't fucking know, Richie kept thinking. "Y-Yeah, can you call him?"

"Yeah, I see his number here..." she says. "What's your name, hun?"

"Kevin-" Richie lies. "I'm Kevin..." He doesn't know why he lies. It just comes out. It comes out before he can stop it. What would the consequences be? Maybe she looks him up, and it turns out he's dead- or... Maybe Eddie wouldn't come if he knew that Richie was the one waiting for him.

The phone's ringing and Richie finds himself terrified. He's terrified of so many things. What if this is the wrong Eddie, and he really is just alone in this time he's unsure of? What if Eddie sees him and leaves him? What if he tells Eddie the truth and he doesn't believe him?

"Hi," the woman says into a phone. "Is this 'Eddie' Kaspbrak? Oh, good. Listen, there's a boy with me who is asking specifically for you. His name is Kevin, he says. We're down at the cafe- Oh?" Richie feels his heart plummeting at the thought of his fuck up- why would Eddie come down just to see some kid named Kevin? "No, that's fine. We'll be here for a while. Can you come down and pick him up? Thank you. See you soon."

His hands were sweating, and he couldn't stop staring at the table in front of him that was lightly dusted with pastry crumbs. Of course, Eddie would come. He'd probably be too anxious over the fact that some random kid knew his name and demanded he contacted him.

"How did you get lost?" the woman asks, setting down her glowing device.

"I don't know," Richie asks. It's too much to process, and he's scared he might just start crying at the table. He's scared to see Eddie. He's scared of so much. Derry's a hell hole, but he's never felt so alone.

He's scared to death of what Eddie would have to say about him.

What he's like in the future. He doesn't want to know what terrible future he had. He doesn't really want to know what Eddie's done in the future.

"Honey-"

The phone starts making noise, and the woman puts it up to her face. Richie looks up to see the smile on her face. "Hi, Annie," she says into the phone. "I'm sorry. I forgot to text you. I'm going to be late today- no, everything is going to be okay. I'm with a lost kid, and we're waiting for his guardian to come and pick him up." Richie groans softly and puts his head back on the table. Eddie's just 'An Adult' now- not that he was ever really a kid with his constant lectures, but the reminder's not great. "It'll all be okay. I'll see you soon. Love you too."

"Who was that?" Richie grumbles, trying to fill the silence.

"That was my wife," she says gently. "Are you sure you're not hungry?"

Wife, she said. She said she had a wife.

"Like a woman?" Richie asks dumbly, eyes widening up at her. Is that even possible? "You married a woman?"

She looks at him as if she's not sure how to respond to this like she couldn't tell if it was an insult or just an inquiry. "Yes," she says slowly. "Is that okay?"

Richie's eyes shoot back, embarrassed by his reaction. He inhaled deeply and looks back down at the table shamefully.

"Does that mean it's okay that I like boys?" he asks quickly.

"I think it was always okay," she answers him. By her tone, Richie can tell that she's smiling. He wants to react somehow to it, but when he finally looks up, he sees a very confused man enter the cafe, looking around. Their eyes lock, and he knows exactly who it is.

Eddie gets really ugly, is the first thing he thinks to himself.

Somehow, he looks exactly the same and incredibly different at the same time. He has more wrinkles than Richie has cash in his wallet, but his eyes haven't changed. They're just as dark and intense as they were when he saw him last. Neither has the pursed look on his face, simulating irritation when Richie knows it's only confusion. He's wearing a coat, but Richie knows he's still wearing stupid clothes under it.

"K-Kevin?" he asks, walking up to the table. His lips purse tightly together, as usual.

Jesus fuck, this is going to be a hard one to explain.

"Hi, Eds," Richie says weakly, and Eddie seems just as annoyed at the nickname as he was years prior.

"Hi," Eddie says to the woman who had been sitting with Richie. "I'm Eddie Kaspbrak. Thank you for taking care of Kevin for me," he says, holding out his hand for her to shake.

"Of course. I'm Emily," she says as she takes his hand. "I should be on my way now, but I'm glad that you got here safely." She looks over at Richie. "It was nice to meet you, honey," she tells him as she stands up from her seat.

Richie reluctantly stands up once it's the two of them alone.

It's weird. It's really fucking weird. Weirder than anything he could have imagined. And Eddie's still short.

Eddie doesn't say anything to him. Richie doesn't say anything either.

They stay silent as they walk to Eddie's car. Richie knows he's wondering what the hell is going on. Beyond speechless. Richie gets it.

"Kevin," Eddie finally says, irritation in his voice, unlocking his car. It's just an SUV. Richie's disappointed he didn't end up with that super fast, super *safe* sportscar that he wanted before.

Richie hops into the passenger seat, quickly buckling before Eddie can bitch at him about 'being unbuckled on New York streets'. Eddie

looks like he's going to throw up as he makes sure his own seat is buckled.

"... What the fuck?" Eddie questions, looking over at Richie with his eyebrows knitted together. He looks so angry. "Did Richie pay you to do this? How much?"

"Excuse me?" Richie squeaks. At least he knows he's not dead in the future now.

"I don't know what kind of gag you're trying to pull on me. Where do you live? Let me take you home. I just don't want to deal with it right now," Eddie says, about as calm as Richie knows Eddie talks.

Richie's swallowing hard, trying not to cry.

"I don't know where to go right now, Eddie. I don't know what the hell you think happened because I sure as hell don't know what happened. I was literally sleeping in my fucking bed, and I woke up here- Eddie, I just want to go home..."

Eddie frowns like he always does. This time, it's worse. "Fuck," he mutters, dragging his hand over his face. "What the fuck are you saying?"

"I don't know," Richie says, his voice shrill. "I was literally just in fucking bed, and then when I woke up, I was here, and it's 2016, and..."

"I don't believe that's possible," Eddie says quickly, dismissing the thought before he can consider it.

"Oh, we fight a child-eating fucking clown from the fucking sewers, and you tell me that this isn't possible?" Richie retorts, the volume of his voice raising. "This is where you draw the line?"

Eddie looks physically ill. He looks at Richie as if he just kicked him in the gut. Richie gulps, finding it harder to find air suddenly. "E-Eddie?" he asks nervously.

"What the fuck," Eddie mutters. Somehow, he seems like he aged even more. He reaches over to Richie, grabbing ahold of his hand.

His hand with the wound that had just finally been closing up.

Richie notices the same scar on Eddie's hand. The same one that Eddie had so bravely let Bill do so recently. It's still thick and ugly, even in the future. That's what happens when someone literally gouges your hand as deep as they can with fucking thick glass.

"I'm not lying," Richie says, looking down at the scars on their hands. "I'm not lying to you, Eddie. I don't know why you don't believe me, you fucking dickwad."

"I know," Eddie sighs. "I can see you're not lying now. You're fucking right. We fight a fucking child-eating clown, and I'm doubting that my fucking childhood friend is thrown into the future. What the fuck?." He throws Richie's hand back into his lap and starts his car.

"Where the shit are we going?" Richie asks quietly, scared that Eddie was still going to try to drop him off somewhere.

"Home," Eddie responds. "We're going to my home."

Richie realizes that his worst nightmare has come true the moment they walk into Eddie's house. First, he never married Eddie. Second, Eddie married his mother.

Eddie says she's out of town at that moment. She's visiting her sister, and he couldn't get off work to go with her. Richie can tell by the decor and the photos on the walls. It's just like walking into Eddie's home in Derry. He keeps expecting Mrs. Kaspbrak to walk down the hall and seethingly mutter 'that Tozier boy in my home?'

"You must be fucking starving," Eddie mutters as he takes off his coat and hangs it up. Afterwards, he rips the glasses off of Richie's face, and by the time Richie's found his arm in order to try to fight for them back, Eddie puts them back on his face. They're clean. Probably cleaner than they've been in months. "Do you want me to order pizza?"

"Yes," Richie finally says. He realizes fully how weird it is that Eddie has the funds for pizza, and seemingly trusts Manhattan enough to be okay with ordering a pizza.

He sits down on the couch, staring at the various nicknacks all around the house while Eddie uses one of those amazingly small devices to contact the local pizza place. None of this is Eddie. It's all hideously his mom. He wants to rip out his hair and scream.

"What the hell do we do now?" Richie asks as Eddie sits down across from him. He slumps on the couch, making a mess of the throw pillows that are so hideous against the couches. If *he* was married to Eddie, their place would have been cool. It wouldn't have been stupid like this.

"I don't know. There's not really a fucking handbook for this kind of situation," Eddie replies. Richie can tell he's tensing up by the mess he's making with just the pillows. "Do you have any questions you need me to answer, like uh, that I should answer?"

"What the fuck are those little things that everyone puts in their pockets?" Richie asks immediately, trying to gesture the swiping motion he saw people doing.

Eddie nearly laughs, going into his pocket. The device is so fucking shiny. "It's a phone, Richie. I'd let you check it out, but you'll get addicted to it by the time we get you back home. It's probably best we don't let you see these kinds of things."

Richie groans as loud as he can, looking up at the ceiling. How is it so normal and so surreal talking to Eddie?

"I don't want to know a lot. I don't want to know what happened to me. I don't want to know what happened to my family. I don't want to know what happened to the rest of the Losers. I didn't even really want to know what happened to you, but I didn't know who else to talk to. I guess I just kind of knew that you would be the one was responsible enough to handle this," Richie tells him. Somehow it's a little easier to talk to *adult* Eddie. He feels like he has less to risk.

"That's okay. You don't need to know any of that," Eddie sighs, leaning his head on his hand.

The pizza-man comes, and Eddie tells Richie to 'explore' while he finds something to put on the TV. Richie complies, wandering the

house, making faces of disgust at the decorations.

Is this what his Eddie is going to turn into? He's going to be ugly when he grows up *and* still stuck in the same, ugly lifestyle?

"What do you do for a job, Eds?" Richie asks as he wanders back into the living room. He's about to sit on the couch, then he remembers *it's Eddie*. He's handing him a plate, and Richie fills his plate up with pizza before sitting at the coffee table with the plate in front of him.

"I'm a risk analyst," Eddie answers.

"Ooooooh, sounds really boring," Richie tells him. He laughs when he hears the groan that comes from Eddie. "I thought you were gonna do something cool- like work on cars. That was always your end goal. You were gonna make this amazingly safe, stupid car- I fucking hate this movie," Richie says when he notices Eddie put on Harry and the Hendersons.

"Shut up, Richie. I know more things than you think I know. Such as, I know you love this stupid movie," Eddie says, and Richie rolls his eyes stubbornly. He doesn't want to admit that he's right.

As Eddie suspected, Richie stays quiet for a good proportion of the movie, besides the annoying comments that he knew would make Eddie snicker. Comments that would make him laugh when he was still normal. A normal fucking thirteen year old.

He hates how close it is to how it always is. He hates how different it is from how it always is.

"Eddie," Richie asks hesitantly when the movie's nearly over. He's laying on the couch now, and Eddie's sitting in the chair on the other side of the living room. Back to the original positions they had when they entered the room. "Your house is just like my fucking grandma's."

"Sure," Eddie says, rolling his eyes at the comment. Richie realizes he's been holding back a lot of his insults, considering how different their relationship is suddenly.

"Can I ask you a question?" Richie asks reluctantly, hugging one of

the blankets.

“Go ahead, but you already did.”

“You promise not to hate me?”

“Richie, whatever you’re going to say, you’ve said worse,” Eddie reminds him, scoffing at the question.

“Are gay people really able to get married now?” Richie asks him skeptically. Eddie looks over at him, and Richie feels his face heating up, scared at how Eddie will react now to what he asked. Coming out to a random lady in a cafe was surreal enough, and now he’s talking to Eddie about ‘gay’ things.

“Y-Yeah, Richie. They are. Why?” Eddie replies, sitting up straight.

“The woman I was sitting with earlier- Emily- she said she has a wife. You don’t see that shit in Derry...”

“No. You don’t see that in Derry,” Eddie responds softly, shaking his head.

“Can I ask something else?” Richie asks, feeling himself trembling slightly.

“Yeah?” Eddie asks, looking at the screen.

“Why didn’t we end up getting married?” Richie asks him, his voice cracking at the end of the question.

Eddie’s quiet. He turns to look at Richie, and Richie wants to pack up and run away from it all- which is probably what he does in the future. “Did you want to marry me?” he asks him, sounding astounded.

“Did I never tell you that...?” Richie asks, his mouth dry at the realization of his cowardice.

“No, you never told me,” Eddie replies under his breath, still seeming stunned.

“Would you have married me if I asked you?” Richie asks him desperately, clinging onto the pillow tighter.

“Richie-”

“Please, answer me...”

Eddie sighs softly, and it seems like it's hard for him to answer him. “Honestly, yes, I probably would have. But you didn't, Richie. You never even let me know you liked me. You kept telling me about these girlfriends you had- but I guess that must not have been true.”

Richie isn't sure what to do with the information that was given to him. The idea that they could have had more, but Richie never had the balls to even tell him. Also, the idea that Eddie would have actually believed him that he would have dated a woman.

He's not surprised it went this way. Even admitting it to Eddie now- in a world that almost doesn't have consequences- made him ill. He felt like he was going to puke.

“Is it my fault your life sucks so much?” he asks, burying his face before Eddie can see him tearing up.

Eddie seems caught off guard at the question. He stutters momentarily before answering, “My life doesn't suck.”

“Eddie, you have a fucking boring job, you married your mom- did you even consider that you would be stealing her away from me?- and you drive a fucking *boring* car. How is it the future, and you have the most boring car? I should have known. I hope I'm at least doing something cool. Maybe I'm fighting robots. Maybe I'm the first person to fight a robot on the moon.”

“I can tell you, you're not doing that.”

“Don't fucking lie to me. I know I'm fighting a robot on the moon as we speak. You're literally just trying to tear me down because you're jealous, I know.”

Eddie laughs. Richie laughs too, trying to distract himself from the things he just dropped on his best friend.

"You're just as annoying as I remember," Eddie says. Richie knows it's not an insult like when his teachers are talking to him.

"Yeah. At least I'm not boring," Richie says, picking his face up from the pillow.

"You're definitely not *boring*."

A silence appears for a moment, but as is typical, Richie is the one to break it.

"How do you think I can go back home?" He asks it quickly, almost like it was an afterthought he had to get out really fast before he forgot it.

"How did you get here?" Eddie asks him since he never got a clear answer before.

"I literally just appeared here," Richie says. "I went to sleep last night, and when I opened my eyes, I was standing on the sidewalk." Eddie looks like he's thinking. "G-d, you look so ugly when you're old," Richie says out loud, grinning at the scowl Eddie gives him.

"Shut up, or I'll throw you out and let you figure it out on your own," Eddie complains.

"You wouldn't do that to little old me," Richie responds, bringing a finger down his face to simulate a tear.

"Richie, I don't know what to tell you. I think the best thing we can do right now is just—"

"Let's just figure it out tomorrow. I don't feel well enough to discuss this tonight," Richie sighs. "You're gonna start talking about math stuff and science shit, and I just don't care about that."

"You're on your own if that's your attitude," Eddie says, throwing his hands up briefly.

"Good," Richie replies. "Ugly."

He laughs when Eddie throws a pillow at him. He catches it and

throws it back, hitting Eddie on the head.

Richie inhales sharply and decides to go back to the topic at hand. "Eds, when I get home, what should I do? Do you think there's some purpose to this?"

"What do you mean, Richie?" he asks him carefully.

"I mean, do you think this is like some fucked up way of telling me to just tell you how I feel about you in the past? So you don't end up ugly and miserable?" Richie sits up on the couch, falling back into the plush of the cushions.

"I'm not ugly, Richie," Eddie argues, taking away what's important from their conversation.

"Yeah, you are, but mostly, you're miserable," Richie tells him as if he's never evaluated his life before.

"I'm not exactly miserable," Eddie argues, getting that frustrated look back on his face.

"You're miserable," Richie informs him. Eddie just rolls his eyes again in response. He really hasn't changed much. "But what do you think, Spaghetti? When I get back, should I tell you?"

"You should tell me... I think you're probably stupid for never telling me if you really felt that way," Eddie told him. "But if you think I'm ugly now, I bet if the roles were reversed, I'd think you were pretty ugly in the future."

"Oh, fuck you. There is no way I grow up to be ugly. I bet I only get more handsome with age. You know your mom seems to really th-"

"Beep, beep, Richie," Eddie says, making Richie laugh at the familiar words.

"I bet I'm like a model. You know, alongside being up in the sky and fighting robots on the moon. Right? Don't even answer, you know I'm right."

"I've never heard you bring up wanting to go up and fight robots on

the moon. When we younger, what was it that you always said-

"Oh, I am not going to listen to the person with the most boring job to ever exist in the world. I'm sorry, Eddie Spaghetti, but have you ever heard of fun? Have you *ever* heard of it? Remember when we went skating and you made Bill sit on the side with you because you were scared about your body mass ratios with the ice- like you were going to fall?"

"You fucking fell, Richie. I saw you fall. You got a bloody nose, and I told you so. And it wasn't that- the ice was melting, and it wasn't safe to be out there. I don't know what the hell you mean by body mass ratio."

"Sure. Don't worry, next time I'll just put all of us in fucking bubble wrap. Would that make you happy? Would you like that?"

Eddie nods his head slightly, and Richie can tell the mood's shifting again. He smiles over at him, and then he looks back at the television.

"Just make sure you tell me when you get back home, okay?" he says.

"Fucking fine, if you insist," Richie replies, a small smile on his face.

The commentary over the movie starts to slow, and when the movie ends, Richie asks him to put on another movie. Eddie puts on Space Balls, and Richie's flattered that Eddie would remember how much he likes that movie.

It's about half way through the movie that he falls asleep, drooling on Eddie's finely taken care of pillow.

It's when he wakes up when he's back in his bed, staring at his nightstand with the clock that's twenty minutes ahead, meant to scare him into being on time for class.

"Holy shit," he whispers, gripping the blankets on his bed tightly, looking around the room.

That wasn't a dream, was it? He can remember it too well. No, it

must have been *something*.

“Richie, come down! Breakfast, honey!” his mom shouts from the bottom of the stairs, loud enough to reach his room.

Everything falls back into its place, with Richie stuck in some sort of daze. Stan shows up at his door after breakfast, and the two of them go up to Richie’s room to grab some of his comics.

“What’s up, Richie?” Stan asks him. Stan, so young, Richie thinks to himself. So young without any wrinkles. He wonders what Stan’s going to look like in the future. Is he going to be ugly like Eddie is? Probably not. He doesn’t have as much anger pent up in him.

“Do you think I’m going to be ugly in the future?” he asks Stan as Stan picks up one of his Flash comics.

“Of course. You’re ugly now,” Stan tells him. Richie forces out a laugh. “Why are you asking me this?”

“I had this really weird dream that I was like, in the future, I guess? I don’t know if it was a dream...” Richie says to Stan. “Eddie is really ugly in the future.”

“What about me?” Stan asks.

“Didn’t see you,” Richie replies, folding his arms. “Just Eddie. Stan, I’m worried- I think it was telling me to do something, but like-”

“What was it telling you to do?”

Richie looks at his door, making sure it’s closed. He sits down on the wood panels of his floor, and Stan frowns, realizing he’s serious. There’s something about Stan. If Richie has to talk to *one* of the Losers, he finds it’s easiest to talk to Stan. Ideally, he’d like to not talk about this at all, but he also knows that Stan can always tell if something’s going on.

“Stan, can you keep a secret? Between us? Until I die,” Richie whispers to him.

“Richie,” Stan sighs, setting the comics down and scooting closer to

him. "Just talk to me."

"Stan," Richie whispers, leaning closer to make sure that only Stan would be able to hear him, and not his parents if they decided to walk past his room. "I-I really like Eddie. Like a lot." Stan nods his head slightly, and Richie sighs, realizing he has to continue. "I saw this future where he marries this really annoying woman. A woman like his mom, which is disgusting because how dare his mom find anyone besides me-"

"Richie."

"But Eddie told me I never told him how I felt... and he told me I needed to tell him how I feel, because I guess he feels the same as I do... Stan, it was really fucking weird, I don't know how to explain it. But- But-..." He looks down at the ground, and Stan's doing that thing he does so well, which Richie supposes is just 'listening', but Richie could never do it as well as Stan. He feels Stan's hand on his shoulder, and he didn't realize how badly he *needed* that confirmation. "Should I tell Eddie?"

"Yes," Stan tells him softly, squeezing his shoulder. "You'll be okay, Richie."

That was how Richie found himself biking with Eddie later that day. He told Stan everything, and Stan supported him with this silly plan.

"Why the fuck are we going to the Kissing Bridge?" Eddie groans, back to his normal self. "Do you remember what happened to Ben there? Do you really want to relive that? What if something else happens to us here?"

"Eds, Bowers' in jail," Richie groans, listening to him whining.

"You don't know that someone else isn't like that. Do you know what my mom would do if I went home all cut up? I would never see the light of day-"

"Eddie, you-"

"Shut up, Richie. I'm just telling you we need to be careful. We can't just come here without being prepared for what might happen. You-"

“Shut up for a minute,” Richie says, braking his bike at the bridge. He gets off, and Eddie follows suit, looking around cautiously as they walk to the worn wood of the bridge. Richie looks back at him, and he can feel the familiar nausea settling in.

He points, and Eddie immediately sees what he’s pointing at. Richie looks down at his feet, scared to see Eddie’s reaction.

“Fuckface, is that- is that our initials?” Eddie asks him quickly, walking over to the wood. Richie finally looks over at him and watches as he runs his fingertips over the scratched wood, his brow furrowed as if it’s a puzzle he has to figure out.

“Y-Yeah,” Richie mutters. For once he’s unsure of what else to say.

Eddie points below what Richie’s scratched in, and Richie sees an ‘R’ with a heart circling it. “Why the fuck didn’t you tell me? I wouldn’t have wasted my time putting this down.”

Richie kneels down beside him, staring dumbly at the simple letter inscribed. Eddie’s staring at him with all the intensity he always carries, and Richie’s almost forgotten how to breathe.

“You’re fucking stupid, Richie,” Eddie tells him, and Richie notices a lack of hostility in his voice. He sees Eddie looks around- as he always does- before closing his eyes and clumsily pecking a kiss on Richie’s lips. Richie feels like he’s about to float, dumbstruck by the gesture.

“Eddie?”

“What?” Eddie asks. Richie can tell he’s trying his best to seem indifferent, but the sides of his lips are threatening to twitch upwards.

“You’re cute, cute, cute.”

“Babe,” Richie says quietly, crawling into bed beside Eddie.

“What do you want?” Eddie mutters, being pulled out of the daze of

sleep. "It's like ten. Fuck off."

"Jesus, Eddie, I didn't realize you were so old," Richie replies, pressing a kiss against his forehead. "Like ten. Shut the fuck up. You know that's nothing."

"For you. Some of us have a real job."

"Wow, you're already putting me to sleep," Richie says, grabbing hold of Eddie's hand, twisting the golden ring between his fingers. He'd never tire of looking at that ring and looking at the man beside him. The man beside him who was in no way ugly. "I love you," he whispers, turning off the light beside them.

"Then let me sleep, Richie," Eddie grumbles into his pillow.

Richie wraps his arms around Eddie, pulling him closely to his body and feeling his warmth against his chest. He buries his face into the crook of his neck, closing his eyes as he takes in just the pure existence of his husband.

"Goodnight, Richie," Eddie mutters.

"Goodnight, babe. I love you," Richie whispers.

"I love you too, fucker."